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Hall of Fame Dinner*

## LOUISE CASH

By Nancy Gill McShea

The tennis reporter Mike Farber wrote in the July 27, 1975 issue of *The Bergen Record*, "Beating Louise Cash in a Bergen County tournament is something like waiting for a bank error in your favor. It could happen but don't hold your breath!"

Louise has dated headlines as a famous New Jersey tennis champion for 50 years, ever since she started playing Eastern junior tournaments at age 11. But she has also won two world tennis championships and is a well traveled athlete whose dazzling 15-foot trophy case spreads across an entire wall. Her road trips around the world and throughout the U.S. are sprinkled with cherished memories and exhilarating highlights, which add up to an inspirational tale of how to succeed in sports.



Louise Cash defeated Margaret Russo to win the women's 45 world singles title in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

She has played tennis with and against Grand Slam event champions such as Margaret Court – at the Longwood Cricket Club in Massachusetts; Bobby Riggs – in a mixed doubles exhibition in La Jolla, California; and Virginia Wade – in a national cup team match in France. She upset the No. 4 seed Francoise Durr in the 1982 US Open women's 35 event and then fell in the semis to Billie Jean King.

But it was in the women's 45 field that Louise recorded her most impressive victories. Six weeks after giving birth to her second daughter, Karen, she won the USTA national 45 singles title at Merion in Pennsylvania. In 1990 she and Barbara Mueller shared the top prize in the world doubles event in Yugoslavia. In 1994 she won the world singles title in Buenos Aires, Argentina. To date, she has filled her treasure chest with 29 USTA tennis balls won in senior national

events – 11 gold for first place, 17 silver for second, and one bronze for third.

A true Eastern veteran, Louise ranked No. 1 in every Eastern junior age division and this past January she won the Louise Cilla Senior Player of the Year award. She began competing in sectional team play at age 17 and her name has been etched in the lineups of 23 Sears Cup and 15 Addie Cup events. She has also competed for Eastern on every USTA national cup team, from the 35s through the 50s, and still plays on the Addie Cup and the 55 intersectional teams.

With that background, it was no surprise when Louise called from the road in early March with a new tournament update as she headed to Cincinnati, Ohio, to play on the President's Cup team at the National Platform Tennis Championships. Her team finished third and she won 4 of her 5 matches. Tennis is her main sport but she's a 27-year veteran of platform tennis competition and has won national doubles titles in the 40, 50 and 60 age divisions. Reached on her cell in mid-March, she reported that she was on court competing in another platform tennis tournament.

Last fall, she traveled to Tucson, Arizona, to compete in the 4.5 USTA National Senior League Tennis Championships. Her team finished third among 17 entrants.

Louise's husband Paul passed away ten years ago, and she quickly focused on the family's athletic pursuits to help her children Lauren, then 12, and Karen, 9, rebound from their loss. "Life goes on and you do the best you can," she said. "...Being competitive athletes keeps my girls busy and builds their confidence. So you keep moving." When Louise won the



Louise Cash of the U.S. (r) and England's Virginia Wade competed in a 1980s' ITF team cup match in France.



Louise Cash defeated Francoise Durr in the women's 35 event at the US Open.

East Stroudsburg University in Pennsylvania. Louise also accompanied Lauren to national junior tennis tournaments around the country until she started driving north to Massachusetts to watch Lauren, now a senior at Boston College, play varsity tennis.

Beginnings often trigger motivation. When Louise was a kid she had fun playing baseball with the neighborhood boys but switched to tennis at age 9 when her father [Frederick Gonerman] told her "they'll never let you on the boys' team...Let's start you playing tennis." She took lessons from Frank Brennan at the Oritani Field Club and won her first Eastern junior tournament at the Montclair Golf Club. "I beat Judy Dixon, now the head coach at UMass, to win that tournament," she said.

"Louise has a reputation for being precise," said Nadine Netter Levy, a lifelong friend who first met Louise across the net in an Eastern 13-and-under junior event. "She has great hands and is extremely accurate with her shots. She is agile, light on her feet and a very intense competitor...very tough mentally."

Louise recalls that Nadine beat her soundly back then but Louise, always courageous, pressed onward and decided to try the women's tennis tour straight out of high school in the mid-1960s. "In those days Billie Jean King, Margaret Court, Rosie Casals and Francoise Durr were all playing and I would lose in the first round," she said. After two years she realized nothing was going to happen there, and again, undaunted by defeat, she started teaching tennis all over Bergen County and became a head teaching pro. For her efforts, she was honored with the YMCA Bergen County Woman Athlete of the Year Award, in 1969 and 1972.

Louise's friend Irene Feldsott admires her qualities, including her tenacity. "It is rare and fortunate to meet a person who makes you feel such admiration," Irene said. "My introduction to Louise was at our tennis club in Ridgewood. We developed a bond while watching our daughters play. Louise focused on her family

national 40 mixed doubles title in California, Lauren was the ball girl for the match. Last spring, Louise accompanied Karen, a high school senior, to Florida to compete in an international junior golf challenge. Karen will play No. 1 on the golf team this coming fall at



Lauren (l) and Karen Cash are accomplished athletes.

like no other person I know...My daughter Allison and Karen [Cash] played for the Northern Highlands High School Varsity team. Her girls are respectful and considerate and for this I give credit to Louise. When she lost her husband Paul she stepped up, encouraged them to participate in sports and helped them to dig deep to be the best. But what is amazing is that Louise still succeeds in sports herself."

Louise remembers that whenever she lost in the final of a junior tennis tournament her mother Irene would say, "Well Louise, you're a bridesmaid today, not the bride." Louise says now that if her mother is looking down from above tonight she will say, "Well, Mom, this evening I'm a bride wearing a diamond tiara."



Louise Cash and Bobby Riggs won a mixed exhibition in LaJolla, California.

## ROBERT A. SCHMITZ

By Nancy Gill McShea

A family friend gave Bob Schmitz a used tennis racket for his tenth birthday, and right then and there he started prepping for a role in every aspect of the organized game. In a tennis career that spans more than 60 years, Bob has thrived on the court as a champion, as the captain of a U.S. team that won a world championship and as a playing member of victorious intersectional team events. Off the court, he has been honored for his work as a high-ranking volunteer and administrator, a community philanthropist and tennis businessman, all while he pursued a successful management career with General Electric and raised a family of tennis players with his wife Barbara.

Success stories can often be traced to a mentor, and Bob said his father Anton hit a few tennis balls with him and got him going. Before long, he and his friends were stringing nets across the wooden floor of the local armory during the rough winters in the Albany area, and he started winning in junior tournaments which in the early 1950s featured a 16-player draw. He moved on to Lafayette College, played No.



From left: 15-Love stalwarts Herb Shultz, Arthur Ashe, Randy Treace and Bob Schmitz.

1 singles and was captain of the tennis team. In 1958 he earned a bachelor's degree in industrial engineering, joined the U.S. Navy and twice won the All Navy tennis championships.

In 1962 he went to work for General Electric and added a master's degree in industrial administration, which prepared him for a high level management career. After several assignments he achieved the position of Manager, Information Technology and Quality Systems, for G.E.'s Power Generation Division, and he worked in that capacity until he retired in 1996.

Bob says that his business background, which was critical for his G.E. career, also helped him to be an effective leader in tennis. He was the original Informa-

tion Technology (ITT) Committee chairman for both the USTA and the Eastern section. In the mid-1990s he developed the USTA's first initiative in tennis applications on the computer and then upgraded the Eastern office with broadband servers and internet communication.

He served as Eastern's president in 1986-87, logged three terms as the treasurer of the section, was a longstanding member of the Finance Committee (1984-2005) and is still a member of both the Eastern and Junior Tennis Foundation Boards of Directors. Eastern honored him as the 1996 Man of the Year and presented him with a half dozen other awards -- for management and club service and member organization support -- and in 1983, the entire Schmitz clan won the Family of the Year Award.

On the national level, he was the captain of the U.S. men's 45 Dubler Cup team that defeated Germany to win the 2004 world championship, and he was the captain of the USTA Stevens Cup. He chaired or was the vice chairman of the Information Technology, Individual Membership, Olympic and the National Tennis Center Committees, and served on 8 others as well.

His friends say he has juggled the demands of business and tennis well because he is smart, organized, dependable and passionate about his tennis.

"Bob was really my mentor," said Sue Wold, Eastern's Northern Region vice president. "He quietly helped me to understand the big picture in tennis."

"Bob's involvement in our 15-Love program is significant," said Herb Shultz, the president of 15-Love, who pointed out that Bob has served for 20 years as the executive vice president on the board of the inner-city tennis program which has over 3,000 young participants involved annually throughout the Capital Region. "He was instrumental in bringing Eastern into the formation of 15-Love at the outset. He chairs our program committee and makes sure activities are delivered in a consistent and quality manner. Without Bob...our program would not be where we are today...not even close!"

His friend Nitty Singh explained that her New York Buzz won the 2008 World TeamTennis Championships in Sacramento, California, and that Bob, in his position as the operational owner of the Schenectady Racquet and Fitness Club, had sponsored the team



The G.E. Executive.

from Day 1. She also confided that when she meets Bob for lunch at Gershon's Deli "he always orders the same sandwich -- with chips. He eats half the sandwich and takes the other half home -- with the chips -- so he'll be in shape to play tennis later that day..."

"He even trained before his [double] knee replacement [in March of 2007], rode his bike three miles a day, won a club doubles championship the day before his operation and then checked into rehab right after surgery so he would get back into competition faster."

Five months after surgery, Bob was back on the court playing tournaments, and by year's end he ranked No. 6 in Eastern men's 70s, 52nd nationally and 15th in the USTA Super Senior Father and Son category with his son Tom. That kind of motivation has earned him rankings in 6 USTA age groups and in every Eastern category, from the men's open standings through all the senior divisions. He also played on

three 4.5 Northern teams that advanced to the USTA League Tennis National Championships.

"There is no tougher competitor," said his friend Gerry Cuva, who played doubles with Bob in 1985 on the first Northern team that qualified for nationals. "Once he steps over the baseline he's brutal! I remember his



From left: Tom and Bob and opponents at 2007 USTA Father-Son nationals.

paramedics arrived and carried him off."

"Copy that!" Jack Bauer would say in the TV hit series "24". This reporter recorded a similar Schmitz thriller in a June, 1986 issue of *Tennis Week* magazine: "Eastern defeated New England to win the Atlantic Coast Men's 45 Intersectional Championship, but to reach the finals...Eastern edged Mid-Atlantic 4-3 in a dramatic showdown. With the dual match deadlocked at 3-all, Eastern President Bob Schmitz and Tony Moreno were down one set and 1-4, 15-40 on Schmitz's serve in the second...Schmitz rallied... and with Moreno salvaged the tense three setter, 5-7, 7-6(5), 6-2... That same day, Schmitz's son Tom, a

senior and the No. 1 player for SUNY-Albany, was a singles quarterfinalist and won All American honors at the NCAA Division 111 National Championships...

"There was tremendous pressure that day..." Bob Schmitz said. "Copy that!" Tom Schmitz would say.

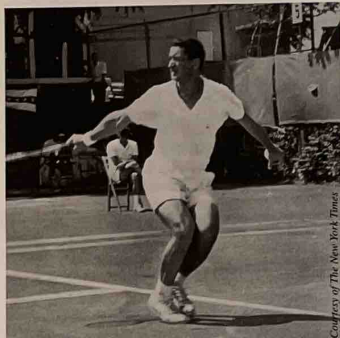


Bob and Barbara's tennis family: back row, from left -- son David, Barbara and Bob, daughter Carolyn, her husband Chris Drake and son Bill; middle, from left -- David's wife Maureen, son Tom and his wife Colleen, grandchildren Erica and Sarah and Bill's wife Katherine; front, from left -- grandchildren Ryan, Robert, Vaughn, Caroline, Claire, Augusta, Emma and Elizabeth. (Not pictured: grandchildren Owen and Reilly.)

## SID SCHWARTZ

By Nancy Gill McShea

Sid Schwartz's daughter Heidi Resnick says there were always people on her family's tennis court when she was a kid. "I came home one day and (the basketball stars) Dr. J (Julius Erving) and John Havlicek were playing," she said. "My father taught tennis to a



Courtesy of The New York Times

Charles Friedman reported in *The New York Times* that Sid Schwartz was a first-rate attraction when he traveled the world tennis circuit.

bunch of guys who played football for the New York Giants, The Wimbledon champs Chuck McKinley, Arthur Ashe and Dick Savitt came to the court. And we had house guests. Ham Richardson once stayed with us when I was in 2nd grade and he came to my school assembly."

Some of Heidi's neighbors joined her in the celebrity watch on the court that Sid built in 1972 in Kings Point, Long Island. They might have seen Vitas Gerulaitis, Renee Richards, Bill Talbert and John McEnroe all show up in one day to play tennis there.

"He invited all the best players he knew to his court," said Fred Kovaleski, a frequent guest who spent time with Sid on the world tennis circuit in the 1950s. "He was a gracious host and got great pleasure out of entertaining us all."

Sid's peers say he's a charismatic, sociable guy with a great sense of humor. In his day, he was a gifted tennis player and a fierce competitor who was often a featured attraction. In fact, the columnist Stan Isaacs once dubbed him "Fast Sidney" in a piece entitled *The Saga of Lieberman's Leap*, when Sid retrieved an impossible shot on match point at the Eastern Clay Courts.

Isaacs reported: "Sid's opponent Anthony Lieberman said, 'I gave him a twist serve that took him off the court at his backhand. His return was a soft, high bounce left of center. I was coming toward the net... I jumped and hit a high backhand shot that took him off the court at his forehand. I didn't figure he'd be able to go for it, let alone get it.' Lieberman continued running and leaped over the net... ready to shake hands... Sidney... ran furiously... to return the shot. Miraculously, Schwartz got his racket on the ball... it lofted high in the air... over the net and plopped to earth... for a winner." Sid won the match and the tournament.

"We did have a wonderful time," said Sid, who enjoyed entertaining the fans. "There were about 200 people in the stands and I thought they would fall out of the stands. They were doubled up, howling."

Savitt said recently. "Sidney could make a great shot from almost anywhere on the court. One of his best moments was when he won the first set, 12-10, from Lew Hoad at Forest Hills."

Richards concurred: "Here was this charismatic New York kid testing the great Lew Hoad on grass in front of a packed house. It was thrilling."

"Sid had every stroke," added Kovaleski. "He hit the ball very hard and had wonderful touch, a rare combination. He was so talented he frequently risked losing and hit a fancy shot rather than go for a normal winner in critical match situations.

"And we did have a good time. When we were playing the Egyptian International Championships, I was driving Sid to his hotel in downtown Cairo, the



Sid (1) won the 1953 All Army singles title at West Point.

traffic slowed and Sid pulled out a water pistol and soaked a traffic cop. I was an undercover CIA agent at the time so I hit the accelerator and took off."

Sid's competitive tennis journey spanned four decades. It began in the early 1940s when his parents Herman and Pauline encouraged him to play, and

ended in 1981 after he won his second national senior clay court title with his University of Miami teammate Tony Vincent.

In 1944 he ranked No. 1 in the Eastern boys' division, No. 3 in the U.S., won the New York State Championships at Syracuse and was a singles semifinalist and the doubles champ at the USLTA national boys' tournament in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

He came of age in 1945 at the 7th Regiment Armory in New York, when at age 16 he upset Gardnar Mulloy, then ranked No. 3 in the U.S., and advanced to the quarterfinals of the U.S. men's indoors. He also defeated Savitt that year at the Armory to win the national junior indoor championships and was later a 7-time doubles champ at the memorial tournament there for Fred Scribner, who died in the Korean War.

In 1945, '46 and '47, Sid was a student at Erasmus Hall High School in Brooklyn and won the Eastern Interscholastic singles and doubles titles. In 1947 he was named to the U.S. Junior Davis Cup team and was on his way.

Richards was a ball kid for Sid at the Armory in 1948 when he took Bill Talbert to five sets at the U.S. men's indoors. "He had a big game and great reflexes that were very suitable for the boards," Richards said.

Brooklyn native Jeff Rose watched Sid come to the attention of local tennis fans in the late 1940s at Brooklyn's Mammoth Tennis Courts, a complex of 52 clay courts that was the hub of tennis activity. "Sid would play exhibitions against Charlie Masterson there," said Rose, who played under Coach Masterson at Poly Prep. "Their matches were equal parts ballet and war, not unlike (Jack) Dempsey versus (Gene) Tunney. Sid won most of those battles and even sophisticated tennis folks watched in disbelief as the warriors made one impossible backhand return after another."



The hostess Mrs. Rose (ctr) greeted (l-r) Fred Kovaleski, Sid Schwartz, Chuck McKinley and Bill Talbert at a tennis exhibition for cancer.

A review of Sid's most impressive stats shows that he ranked No. 11 in singles and third in doubles in the United States. He played on scholarship at the University of Miami from 1947-1950 and won the 1953 All Army singles title at West Point. He competed at the French, Italian and Wimbledon Championships in 1955 and '57 and recorded victories over Grand Slam event champs Pancho Gonzalez (1948-49 U.S. Championships) at the Eastern Grass Courts in Orange, N.J.; Vic Seixas (1953 Wimbledon, 1954 U.S. Championships) at a U.S. tournament in Buffalo; Jaroslav Drobný (1951-52 French, 1954 Wimbledon) in Weisbaden, Germany; and Merv Rose (1954 Australian), Budge Patty (1950 Wimbledon), among others. While touring on the Middle Eastern circuit, he was twice a doubles finalist with German great Baron Gottfried von Cramm - in Cairo and Alexandria. Back home, he was a singles quarterfinalist at the 1950 U.S. National Championships at Forest Hills, an accomplishment that netted him elite status as a member of the US Open "Final 8" Club.

What Sid's stats don't show is that he is also a concerned citizen. He lives in Florida now but back in the 1970s he was the president of the Great Neck, N.Y., chapter of the American Cancer Society. His father had been a smoker and died of lung cancer. Sid was also a smoker and after his father passed away he promptly visited a hypnotist to quit the habit, became a big advocate of anti-smoking and hosted tennis exhibitions to benefit the cause.

"I quit smoking on a Monday, August 1, 1970 at 9 a.m.," said Sid Schwartz, a man known for his passion and determination.



From left, Sid and Naomi Schwartz, David Dinkins, Vic Seixas and guest at the US Open "Final 8" Club.

